



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

INTERPRETIVE OPINION

Pursuant to §103-50, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), all buildings and facilities constructed by, or on behalf of the State or any county, shall conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and amendments. In accordance to HRS §103-50 and Chapter 11-217, Hawaii Administrative Rules, the Disability and Communication Access Board has authority to issue interpretive opinions to HRS §103-50 design standards.

Docket: **DCAB 2006-03:** Can non-continuous grab bars be used on the back or sidewall of accessible showers?

Summary The current ADAAG does not address the use of non-continuous grab bars in roll-in showers that are larger than the required 30" x 60" minimum size. The request for an interpretive opinion was made because the longest manufactured length of a grab bar that is readily available is 48" long. Lengths longer than 48" are only available by special order. The ADAAG Figures 35 & 37 indicates that the grab bar is continuous. However, discussions with both the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Access Board, both noted that the ADAAG does not specifically state grab bars must be continuous.

The number of grab bars used along one wall shall be kept to a minimum to reduce the number of breaks which could make the use of the grab bars difficult for those individuals relying on the grab bars for support or stability. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines; Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines; Final Rule (ADA/ABA AG) which has not been adopted by the U.S. Department of Justice, therefore it is not enforceable, and Interpretive Opinion DCAB 2005-10 were used to establish the minimum and maximum distance between adjacent grab bars.

Ruling: For buildings or facilities subject to HRS §103-50,

ADAAG Section 4.21.4 Grab Bars

For accessible showers, non-continuous grab bars may be used when standard manufactured lengths do not exist. A maximum of two grab bars is permitted along the shower wall that exceeds 60". Where multiple grab bars are used, grab bars shall be installed at the same height above the finish floor. Where a seat is not provided in accessible roll-in type shower compartments, grab bars shall be provided on three walls. Grab bars shall be installed 6" maximum from adjacent walls. A minimum of 3" and a maximum of 6" clear distance between adjacent grab bars shall be provided.

[Rul: 9/27/2006] (Auth and Imp: HRS §103-50)

If you have any questions or comments regarding this ruling, please call us at 586-8121.

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